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ABSTRACT

Due to increasing numbers of immigrants since 1960, especially Finnish children, Sweden began to establish instructional objectives and policies for immigrant children. Stated aims clearly stress that the primary aim in the teaching of immigrant children in Swedish schools is to promote bilingualism. While the short-term aim is to produce functional bilingualism (equal ability to speak and read both languages), the long-term aim is to equalize the learning opportunities for these children in the regular school system. V. P. John and V. M. Herner (1971) propose four models of bilingual education: informal, supplementary, transition, and two-way. The Swedish model is a transition model which uses the native language as a bridge to the national language. The mother tongue (Finnish) is developed to a relatively high degree during pre-school years and the first two years in the compulsory school; Swedish is given subordinate importance until grade 3 when training in the national language is necessary. The objective is to reach functional bilingualism by the end of grade 3. Development in the native language after age 10 is highly dependent upon the individual child and parental support. (EA)

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AIM AND GOALS FOR BILINGUAL-BICULTURAL EDUCATION

SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM ASPECTS

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF LUND
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1. Why the problem has been actualized in Sweden

During 1960 there has been a steep rise in the number of immigrants coming to Sweden. At the beginning of 1970 the total number of immigrants in Sweden was estimated to half a million people. Of these, about 60.000 are children in the compulsory school-ages, 7 - 16 years, and at least as many children are to be found at the pre-school level, 0 - 6 years. Due to the Nordic labour-market the largest number of immigrants come from Finland. About half of the total group of immigrant children are Finnish.

2. Official statements about aims and goals for the instruction of immigrant children in Sweden

The following quotations from the Supplement (1973) to the basic school curriculum dealing with the education of immigrant children, states the aims for their instruction:

> "Support for education is one of society's main actions to help immigrants. This aims at giving immigrant children education equivalent to that of Swedish children. Instruction in the Swedish language and an introduction to Swedish social conditions is a primary necessity, but the immigrant also need support in his endeavour to retain contact with his own country's language and culture and help to spread information about his own culture to the inhabitants of his new country." (SUPPLEMENT, 1973, p 6)

> "Taking into consideration the difficulties which fall immigrant children on their arrival at a Swedish school, it is of the utmost importance to provide them with instruction which is specially adapted in regard to content and methodical planning. Such instruction is comprised partly of different forms of supportive teaching in order to make the transition to a Swedish school easier for the child, and partly of voluntary instruction in the pupils' mother-tongue and the cultural conditions of their native country in order to help them preserve their language and cultural identity.

> The school should also strive to attain a mutual understanding and respect between Swedish pupils and pupils with a different cultural background, as well as a positive interest for similarities and differences in language, cultural background, norms and values". (SUPPLEMENT, 1973, p 6)

The aims for bilingual teaching are more precisely stated in the following lines:

> "It is the task of the school to introduce into both Swedish and immigrant pupils, respect and interest for each other's mother-tongue, and to stimulate the immigrant children's pride in their native language. As the Swedish school has restricted resources for instruction to be conducted in the various languages, it is also essential to stimulate the parents' interest for active participation in the maintenance and development of the children's own language". (SUPPLEMENT, 1973, p 94)

> "Thus, bilingual teaching in the basic school ought to have as its aim, an equal command of both languages". (SUPPLEMENT, 1973, p 94)

In the above citations it is clearly stressed that the primary aim in the teaching of immigrant children in Swedish schools, is to promote bilingualism.

3. Definitions of bilingualism

Bilingualism is here taken to mean not merely the ability to speak two languages but also to participate in the culture communicated by the languages and of which the languages are an integrated part. Therefore the purpose of bilingual education is to produce a functional bilingualism in the children.

Functional bilingualism has two major objectives, perception and production. Perception is the common name for the function of comprehension, listening and reading. Production is the common name for the functions of expression, speaking and writing.

4. Definition of objectives for bilingual education

On a more specific basis it can be stated that the concrete short-term objectives for bilingual education are:

1. To enable the children of immigrant parents to comprehend both languages in listening to spoken language and reading of texts.

2. To enable the chilren of immigrant parents to express themselves in speech and writing in both languages.

However, the overall long-term aim for bilingual education of immigrant children is to equalize the learning opportunities for these children in the regular school system. This leads to the following more extended goals:

1. To enable children in the high grades to progress in academic subjects of the same rate as their Swedish age-mates.

2. To enable children to develop a positive self-concept and pride in their dual linguistic ability and their dual cultural context.

3. The potential capacity to live and work in both countries.

5. Different types of bilingual education

Many definitions of bilingual education have been used. For our research-work we have adopted the definition by GAARDER (1967): "A bilingual school is a school which uses, concurrently, two languages as mediums of instruction in any portion of the curriculum except the languages themselves". (p 110)

The existing programs of bilingual education are of many different types. The most systematic exploration of the bases for the selection of bilingual models has been developed by MACKEY (1970). He proposes four areas to be considered in characterizing bilingual education: the learner in the home, the curriculum of the school, the community in the nation, and national language patterns. On these ground he separates a number of models for bilingual schooling with the language as the basic component.

A more descriptive overview of bilingual education is proposed by JOHN and HORNER (1971). They speak of four different models:

A. The informal model
B. The supplementary model
C. Transition model
D. The two-way model.

A. The informal model

In a non-English-speaking community in USA this model is realized, when, for example, aides make an informal use of the child's native language in the classroom to explain school routines to the child. Or, occassionaly some other paraprofessionel can present a lesson to a class in the children's own language (Spanish or French), in cases where the teacher only is fluent in English.

This informal use of two languages in the classroom is not planned systematically. Therefore, it cannot be considered as bilingual education in the sense we use it here.

B. The supplementary model

In this model instruction in the native language is limited to a small portion of the school-day. In New Mexico all the children in the Pecos school, even including the small number of native speakers of English, daily receive half an hour's instruction in Spanish.

C. Transition model

Bilingual instruction according to the transitional model mainly uses the native language as a bridge to the national language.

JOHN and HORNER (1971) quote the following recommendations from the Texas Educational Agency (1967):

"Non-English-speaking children needing special instruction to adjust successfully in school and to use the English language may be placed in a modified program which makes full use of the pupils' ability in the language they understand and speak when enrolled in public schools..

The modified program should have the following characteristics: The first language of the child is used as a means of instruction in developing the basic skills of reading, spelling, writing, and arithmetic.

English is introduced as a second language; as the child becomes more proficient in understanding and speaking the second language, the use of the first language as a means of instruction should be decreased, while the use of English for this purpose is increased.

The use of both languages as a medium of instruction is continued for a minimum of three years and thereafter until such a time as the child is able to comprehend and communicate effectively in English.

To assure the development of a literate bilingual, the child is given the opportunity for continued study of the four basic skills of his first language (understanding, speaking, reading, and writing". (JOHN & HORNER, 1971, pp 183-184)

MACKEY (1970) describes such a program as the Transfer type and notes:

"The transfer pattern has been used to convest from one medium to another. For example, in some nationality schools in the Soviet Union a child may start all his instruction in his home language, perhaps that of an autonomans Soviet republic, and gradually ends up taking all his instruction in the language of the Soviet Union". (MACKEY, 1970, p 68)

D. The two-way model

In this model the two languages are used side by side alternatively. Two of the types identified by MACKEY (1970) are categorized by JOHN and HORNER (1971) as two-way models, D D M (Dual Medium Differential Maintenance) and D E M (Dual Medium Equal Maintenance). The DDM is described as follows:

"In maintaining two languages for different purposes, the difference may be established by subject matter, according to the likely contribution of each culture. Often the culture based subjects like art, history, literature and geography are in the dominant home language. Bilingual schools in certain parts of Wales are of this type". (MACKEY, 1970, p 71)

In such a program culture-based subjects usually are taught in the native language, while the more traditional academic subjects are taught in the national language.

The Dual Medium Equal Maintenance (DEM) gives equal treatment of the two languages:

> "In some schools, as those found in certain parts of Belgium, South Africa, and Canda, it has been necessary - often for political reasons - not to distinguish between languages and to give equal chance to both languages in all domains. This is done by alternating on the time scale - day, week, month, or year from one language to the others". (MACKEY, 1970, p 72)

JOHN and HORNER (1971) give the following example from a program developed in Las Cruces in New Mexico:

> "In the early stages of the program the day was divided in half, instruction in Spanish in the morning, and English in the afternoon. However, as the program developed, the teachers developed their own class schedules. While about half of the day continued to be spent in each language, individual instruction varied; in some classes both languages may be mixed in one lesson, or a lesson in English may directly follow a lesson in Spanish". (JOHN & HORNER, 1971, p 186)

6. The importance of teaching the mother tongue

Linguistic experts and also many educationalists have for many years emphasized the importance of the child's native language. They underline the significance of reading practice and school instruction being conducted in the children's own language when the child enters school. Above all, the children's first steps in reading and writing should be made in their own native language.

An expert committee meeting in 1969 at the Unesco Institute for Education in Hamburg give in their report Mother Tongue Teaching (1972) new arguments for the importance of the mother tongue as the first language for instruction.

> "Psychological and linguistic studies are of comparatively recent origins and it was not formerly recognised how closely related are the development of thought and speech, and how closely bound up with speech is the growth of the personality in its individual and social aspects. Nor was there then sufficient emphasis on the individual

needs of the learner. For some less-able children literacy is a new skill, hard of attainment; oracy builds on a system they already possess, and the possiblities of success are greater". (CANHAM, 1972, p 13)

"The initial impulse for valuable talk and writing comes from having something which the child feels is important to say, and this comes from having meaningful experiences. First-language teachers now attempt to draw on the experience of children, and to supply them with experience on which to draw. There are the experiences of visiting places or seeing pictures and statuary, or watching a sparrow peck about in the gravel, as Keats watched a sparrow pecking in the gravel". (CANHAM, 1972, p 14)

"The curriculum in L 1 (the first language) is to be viewed as a continuing process, without definite breaks or stages: it is not sequential in the strict sense; rather it represents a growth in experience. There is more advance in some areas at some times than in others. The waves advancing up a beach provide a much better analogy than does that of someone climbing a ladder". (CANHAM, 1972, p 15-16)

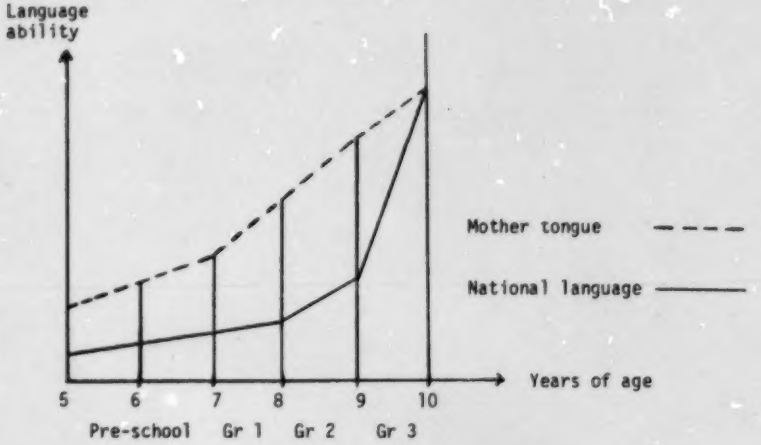
The organisation plan of the project "Models for bilingual instruction of immigrant children" has for this reason been formed to give the mother tongue, Finnish, a dominant place during the two pre-school years. During the first two years in the compulsory school (Grundskola) we continue to use the mother tongue for instruction in reading and writing, but Swedish is also used as a teaching language to an equal degree by the Swedish classteacher and other Swedish teachers. (For details see JOHANNESSON, 1975)

7. Expected effects of the bilingual education practised in the project

The project is planned to continue until the children reach the end of the lower level (grade 3) of the compulsory school. At that time we expect them to have reached the goal of functional bilingualism, with equal ability to speak and read both languages.

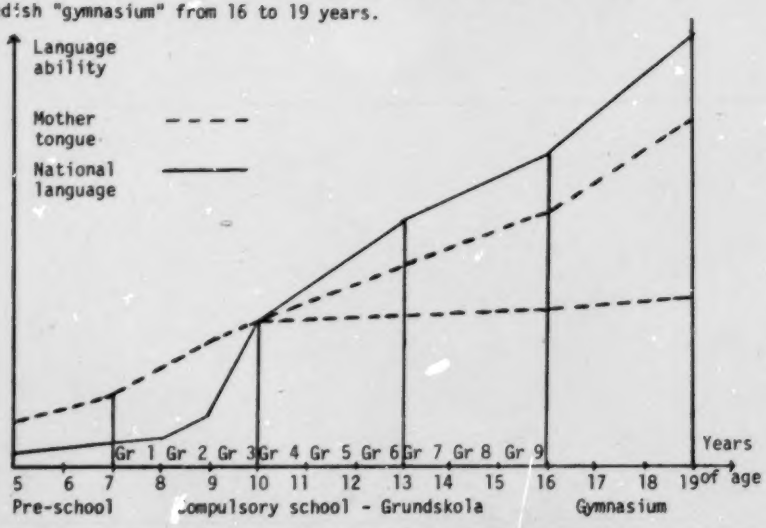
According to JOHN and HORNER (1972) our model would be classified as a transition model, where the mother tongue is used as a bridge to the national language.

The expected way to functional bilingualism at the end of grade 3 can perhaps best be illustrated by a diagram.



The mother tongue is developed first to a relatively high degree and the national language (Swedish) is given subordinate importance until last year of the lower level. At that stage (grade 3) intensive training in the national language is necessary.

For many reasons it would seem meaningful to attempt to outline the possible long-term language development of these bilingual children during the following years of compulsory school, from 10 years to 16 years - and in the Swedish "gymnasium" from 16 to 19 years.



After the age of 10 the ability to speak the native language could stagnate if the child is not given special stimulation in school to continue to study and use his native language.

The way in which the native language develops after the age of 10 years very much depends upon the child himself and the support given by his parents as well as their language habits and literary interests.

These considerations seem to indicate that the short-time effects could only be treated as temporary goals. Even in planning for the lower level, grade 1-3 of the compulsory school, long-term perspectives must always be kept in mind, when formulating desirable goals.

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